



Equity Council Agenda

Zoom Meeting Time: June 2, 2021 3:30 – 4:30 PM

Welcomes & Introductions

- Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) Secretary Jones was unable to join the meeting because her attendance was required at a General Assembly budget hearing
- Lieutenant Governor Sabina Matos welcomed the Council members

COVID-19 Updates - Higher Education Institutions: Acting Executive Director of the Rhode Island Higher Education and Industry Centers Amy Grzybowski

- While not all individuals 18 to 24 years old attend institutes of higher education (IHEs), COVID-19 vaccine uptake is at 44.8% among that age category in Rhode Island.
- Six Rhode Island institutions are mandating vaccinations (with medical and religious exemptions): Brown University, Johnson and Wales University (JWU), New England Institute of Technology (NEIT), Providence College (PC), Roger Williams University (RWU), and University of Rhode Island (URI).

COVID-19 Updates for K-12 Schools – Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) Deputy Commissioner Kelvin Roldan

- K-12 schools show less than 1% positivity rates because they are controlled environments, leading to a lower rate of infections. For more extensive case rate and vaccination data, [click here](#).
- Approximately 90% of Pre-K to 12 teachers, staff, and daycare staff are vaccinated.
- RIDE is developing strategies to ensure that students not only return to school and their previous academic levels but are also accelerating their learning.
- RIDE is distributing federal emergency funding (through the CARES act and American Rescue Plan) to individual school districts, especially those serving students most in need including multi-lingual students, students with differing abilities, and lower-income students.

Community Feedback: What are you hearing from the community? What should the State know?

- A Council member voiced the concern COVID-19 vaccine-hesitant parents are likely not going to vaccinate their children for the same reason. RIDE is working with Rhode Island school districts to provide accurate information, and with the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) to establish consistent messaging.
- Council members agree that outreach by community leaders of color in communities of color is key to improving vaccine uptake rates. For more information on Rhode Island's Hard-Hit Community Vaccination Strategy, visit <https://covid.ri.gov/vaccination/rhode-islands-hard-hit-community-vaccination-strategy>.
- In response to a previous request, RIDOH reported that no participating organizations of the COVID-19 Mini-Grant program have exhausted their given funding.

Next Steps

- The RIDE and RIDOH teams will present vaccination data disaggregated by race, age, and school district at a future Council meeting.

Close

- Closing remarks given by Lieutenant Governor Sabina Matos

